

Utah Law Enforcement Agencies To Help Enforce Bird Quarantine

Public Asked To Not Import Birds From Quarantine Zone

Salt Lake City – In an effort to prevent the spread of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) in poultry, the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) is asking the Utah Highway Patrol, Utah's 29 county sheriff's offices, and the Utah Department of Transportation to assist in enforcing a federal quarantine on the movement of birds into Utah. The quarantine prohibits the importation of all eggs, chicks, pullets, adult poultry, game birds, or caged birds originating in, or moving through areas of Southern California and Southern Nevada.

Utah does not have Exotic Newcastle Disease, which is a highly contagious foreign animal disease that affects most species of birds. The disease poses no threat to humans or to the food supply.

Utah's State Veterinarian, Dr. Michael R. Marshall, is appealing to pet bird owners, falconers and backyard poultry owners to exercise every precaution to avoid introducing this disease into Utah by not transporting birds to or from the quarantine areas.

"We are asking that the public abide by the quarantine and not bring birds into Utah that have been in the quarantine areas," said Dr. Michael R. Marshall, UDAF state veterinarian.

"We are also asking law enforcement to assist us by stopping and inspecting any vehicle suspected of violating the quarantine," he added.

The federal quarantine covers the California counties of, Los Angeles, San Bernadino, Riverside, San Diego, Imperial, Orange, Ventura, and Santa Barbara. It also covers Clark County and a portion of Nye County in Nevada.

If an illegal movement of birds from the quarantine area is detected, please notify the office of the State Veterinarian at 801-538-7161. The following information should be gathered and provided at that time:

Name, address, phone number, driver's license number, license plate number, vehicle description, etc.

Origin and destination of the birds.

Type and number of birds in the shipment.

Certificate of Veterinary Inspection number, Entry

Permit number, shipping documents, etc.

Fighting cocks have been heavily implicated in the transmission of END and are difficult to control because of the secretive nature of that culture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates there may be thousands of fighting cocks in Utah.

The Utah Highway Patrol and the Utah Department of Transportation's Ports of Entries have been informed of the quarantine and are working to prevent the introduction of END in the state. Vehicles transporting birds are required to stop at the Ports of Entry and show proper documentation.

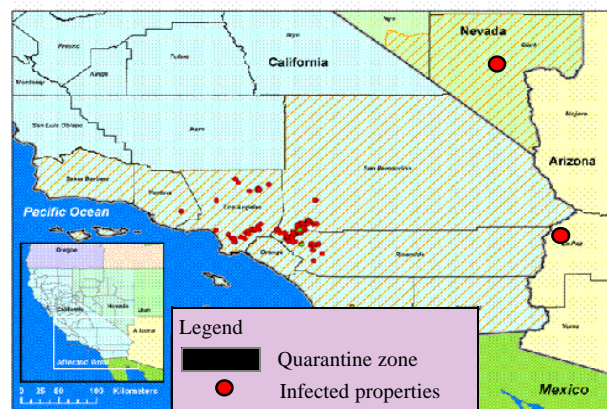
California is in the process of destroying nearly 2 million END-infected chickens while the U.S. Department of Agriculture is contributing \$40 million to that state to eradicate the disease. As many as 60 percent of the USDA Veterinary Services workforce may be deployed to the quarantine area at any given time.

Utah's egg and poultry industry generated \$88 million dollars to the state's economy in 2001. Exotic Newcastle Disease is a serious threat to that industry, as well as to the well being of pet birds, backyard flocks and other wild and domestic fowl.

More information about Exotic Newcastle Disease is available at www.ag.utah.gov/

**Utah Chickens and Eggs Are Safe to Eat
This Disease Has NO Public Health Consequence**

Exotic Newcastle Disease in California and Nevada



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Utah Governor
Utah Commissioner of
Agriculture and Food
AG. News Editor

Michael O. Leavitt
Cary G. Peterson

Larry Lewis

Chronic Wasting Disease Discovered In Eastern Utah

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has been detected in a two-year old buck mule deer northeast of Vernal, Utah. The diagnosis was made during an intensified surveillance effort, which was initiated this last hunting season following the discovery of the disease in Colorado, just 30 miles from the Utah border. Until this single case, there had been no diagnosis of CWD in Utah in wild deer or elk or in private herds. The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, the Division of Wildlife Resources, the USDA, and Utah Elk Breeders remain committed to preventing the introduction and establishment of the disease to Utah.

There is no evidence of natural transmission of CWD to other livestock or humans.

CWD is not expected to quickly spread through the elk and deer populations in Utah, since CWD develops slowly and effects mainly animals that are genetically susceptible to the disease.

"This discovery is not unexpected, and comes as somewhat of a relief to the many agencies that have been testing and monitoring for the disease for some time," said State Veterinarian, Dr. Michael R. Marshall. "We now know where it is, and can focus our energies on preventing it from spreading," he added.

Chronic Wasting Disease is caused by an infective agent known as a protease resistant prion protein (PrP) and has been present in deer and elk in northeastern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming since the late 1960's.

The disease has more recently been detected in wild deer in Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, New Mexico, and the province of Saskatchewan.

CWD has been detected in privately owned elk on 23 elk ranches in 7 states and several ranches in the province of Saskatchewan and one in Alberta.

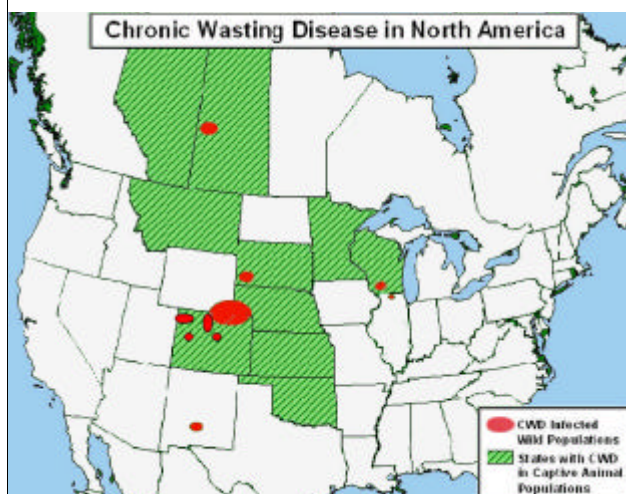
CWD damages the nerve cells of the brain and is one of a group of diseases classified as Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE), which includes Scrapie, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), Cruetzfeld-Jacob Disease (CJD), and others.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food and the Division of Wildlife Resources, with funding support from USDA, has performed surveillance studies to check for Chronic Wasting Disease in Utah. A two-year study in 1998-99 of more than 750 wild deer and elk in Utah found no positive animals. Surveillance was intensified this past hunting season because of the discovery of CWD in western Colorado. Approximately 1500 samples were collected this year. Results have been received from 1400 samples with one positive.

In 1998, Utah initiated a program of voluntary testing for CWD upon the death of any farmed elk. Mandatory testing for CWD was implemented in 2000 at the request of the Utah Elk Breeders. No cases of CWD in Utah captive elk have been detected by that testing. A temporary moratorium on elk importation was instituted in July 2002 in response to the more widespread distribution of CWD.

The Utah state veterinarian has acted to prohibit importation of any elk from herds that are known to be positive for CWD and has prevented the movement of any elk that may have had exposure to an infected herd. He has requested CWD emergency disease funding from USDA for testing of all potentially exposed elk at the request of the Utah elk breeders.

Utah is now among 12 states and two Canadian provinces with populations of wild or domestic elk/deer infected with Chronic Wasting Disease.



Commissioner Peterson Promotes Agricultural Trade In Mexico

Salt Lake City -- Utah Agriculture Commissioner, Cary G. Peterson, discussed various ways to increase Utah agricultural exports to Mexico during the state's first post-Olympic economic trade mission. The mission to Mexico is one of several trips scheduled by Governor Leavitt to promote Utah.

Commissioner Peterson accompanied the governor, and met with top-ranking Mexican agricultural leaders in hopes of expanding Utah-Mexico agricultural trade.

"The mood of the people here is that they are very positive about Utah products," said Commissioner Peterson. "The challenge is to successfully negotiate through national and international trade barriers," he added.

One focus of the discussions centered on creating cost-effective inspections of Utah products headed to Mexico. Currently Mexico requires expensive and sometimes redundant inspections that are cost-prohibitive for Utah producers.

A breakthrough came when Mexican agricultural leaders pledged to accept poultry inspections conducted by the USDA or the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food of poultry products from Utah. The inspection agreement will open the way for increased sales of Utah turkey to that country. Mexico had insisted that inspections conducted for listeria and salmonella be conducted only by laboratories in Mexico.

Exporters had expressed concern over the accuracy of those labs, and had asked that Mexico rely on U.S. inspections. Commissioner Peterson also discussed ways of increasing Utah apple imports into Mexico. Currently Mexico does not recognize U.S. inspection of Utah apples. Commissioner Peterson discussed methods of inspection that would satisfy Mexico's import rules while removing a financial burden from Utah exporters.

The Utah delegation also discussed the benefits of an initiative to educate migrant workers entering Utah to speak and read the English language. Utah offered making available to workers a CD-based English language course developed by Utah State University. Both workers and employers would benefit from improved communication.